

Waltham Forest Council Adopts ITIL with Hornbill's Supportworks



Business Benefits:

- One point of contact for all customers, including queries assigned to third party support services.
- SelfService Portal enables customers to log and track calls, improving communication and customer satisfaction.
- Regularly updated Knowledgebase enables sharing of common problems and solutions for faster resolution.
- Workflow processes support introduction of ITIL best practice and underpin ISO20000 project.
- More efficient call logging and tracking enables IT team to be more effective, "do more with less", and meet SLAs.
- Reports with call statistics enable proactive planning.

Over 225,000 people live in the Borough of Waltham Forest and it is recorded as one of the most diverse in London, with a track record of people from all walks of life and different backgrounds living together.

Waltham Forest Council provides a range of services to this diverse public including environmental health, recycling, street cleansing, Council Tax and Business rates collection, benefits, planning and building control, community safety and refuse collection. The services are supported by internal functions including audit, communications, finance, IT and personnel in the Chief Executive's and Corporate Services departments.

The Council staff relies upon IT applications and systems to support its services to the public. The IT department has over 40 staff dedicated to service over 3200 recorded IT assets and over 4000 internal customers, as well as a first line support call centre of an additional 40 staff. For over five years the IT team has used Hornbill Supportworks service management software to manage and log queries from its internal customers.

Efficient Call Handling

All queries are routed through to the call centre which are then logged and passed onto the appropriate team for resolution. Customers can also log calls via the SelfService Portal on the council's intranet. This has increased customer satisfaction and improved communication between IT and the business, since customers are able to log and track progress of their queries.

"Moving to the SelfService Portal and the call centre has proved to be a much more efficient way of working," explained Fay Heatley, ICT Unit Operations Manager at Waltham Forest Council.

"Everything is logged properly, which means that we deal with queries in a systematic way and don't lose any calls."

Tracking all calls using Supportworks also enables the teams to see exactly what is happening with a call and the levels of complexity involved in resolving the queries. Reports enable the IT

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team to identify peaks and troughs in calls and proactively plan, enabling it to resource correctly to meet Service Level Agreements.

Faster Resolution of Problems

A key element of the initiative to promote working improvements is to record more information and share best practice across the IT team, to avoid the situation of people carrying information in their heads. The team regularly updates the Frequently Asked Questions section on the intranet site, as well as populating the knowledge management tool with information, to assist engineers with diagnostics and to resolve incidents quickly.

The Council team has also extended the use of Supportworks to its other strategic IT partner, Dell. The Dell on-site team uses Supportworks to log and fix hardware faults and support the managed print service.

“We always have the same point of contact for customers, whatever the problem,” explained Fay Heatley. “The great thing about this model is that we can use it to introduce new services, whether supported by our internal IT team or third party partners - the service is now seamless.”

Measurable Service Excellence

Following the successful implementation and use of the system, the IT team is developing its use of the tool to improve working processes for incident, change and problem management. The IT team is focusing on maximising the use of Supportworks to support its IT services as it moves towards its goal of achieving ISO 20000 standard for measurable excellence in IT services.

“We have improved our service extensively since using Supportworks. We handle over 500 calls per week, a considerable increase and are now planning to use the tool more extensively to support our move towards ISO 20000,” said Fay Heatley.

The ISO 20000 project, termed Forest IT (FIT) for the Future, is a vision that the IT department holds that encompasses several areas: a centralisation and upgrade of all IT infrastructure, working with strategic IT partners, including Dell, BT, Fox and Hornbill and an alignment with the external Council-wide Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

Improving Performance

“The ISO 20000 standard is a goal that we have set ourselves over the next three years and is part of a Council-wide programme to improve services to customers to auditable and repeatable standards,” said Fay Heatley.

“We are confident that we will be able to meet this challenge within IT. With a multi-sourced environment we obviously retain some functions in-house, which by nature are leaner and so performance management is vital. Supportworks is an excellent tool to enable us to manage this and we are seeking to gain benefits from this toolset that have not previously been realised.”

Introducing ITIL Best Practice

A key part of the route to meeting ISO 20000 is adopting ITIL best practice. Managers in the department have already identified the importance of adopting ITIL working practices that will enable teams to proactively plan and manage the IT environment, rather than reactive ‘firefighting’.

The team has introduced some training workshops to present the ITIL concept, prior to launching its first ITIL process for incident management. Additional screens have been developed within Supportworks to support the new ITIL workflow processes, designed around new call classifications and prioritisations.

There is no doubt that Supportworks is playing a critical role in the change programme that the IT team is initiating to meet the ISO 20000 challenge. “Supportworks will carry us through the next year and beyond as we focus on developing the existing framework to support our move to ITIL. As a strategic partner Hornbill is supporting us through this transition,” concluded Fay Heatley.

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